

# Marching Band Practice Lot Preparation

To future generations of Band Parents,

For years, the RHS Marching Band has used the rear parking lot of the high school to conduct its marching practice and rehearsals. The Marching Season officially starts with a two week "Band Camp" in early August. (Marching 'Clinics' are scattered throughout the summer, but those are informal and don't require Practice Lot prep.) The Practice Lot is usually closed for parking for the duration of the marching season, August through November.



For many years, prior to the start of band camp, the great Band-Dad and Pit-Crew Master, Brian Donnelly had prepared the lot with some help from others, but usually initiating all of the work on his own. Over the years, he has accumulated and passed down from generation-to-generation, the secrets of his work. With this document, we plan to preserve that knowledge so that You, the band Parent, may complete the work of the Master!

Basically, we strive to make the lot presentable and usable for the band kids so that they can hit the ground 'marching' the first day of band camp. There are three basic parts to the preparation: (1) sweeping & painting the surface, (2) roping off the area to prevent cars from parking in the practice space, and (3) trimming the hill behind the lot for the directors to get a birds-eye view of the field. *{Please note that the trees on the hill are protected under the county. Removal of the trees is illegal.}*



In order to complete the tasks, you should assemble a crew of at least three people. FIVE are recommended. More helpers are always welcome.

# Planning

Usually, we use the weekend prior to band camp to prep the practice lot. A week or two prior to that is a good time to start asking for volunteers. Get the event on the calendar (maybe even plan for a rain date) and find out who can be there and what they can bring.

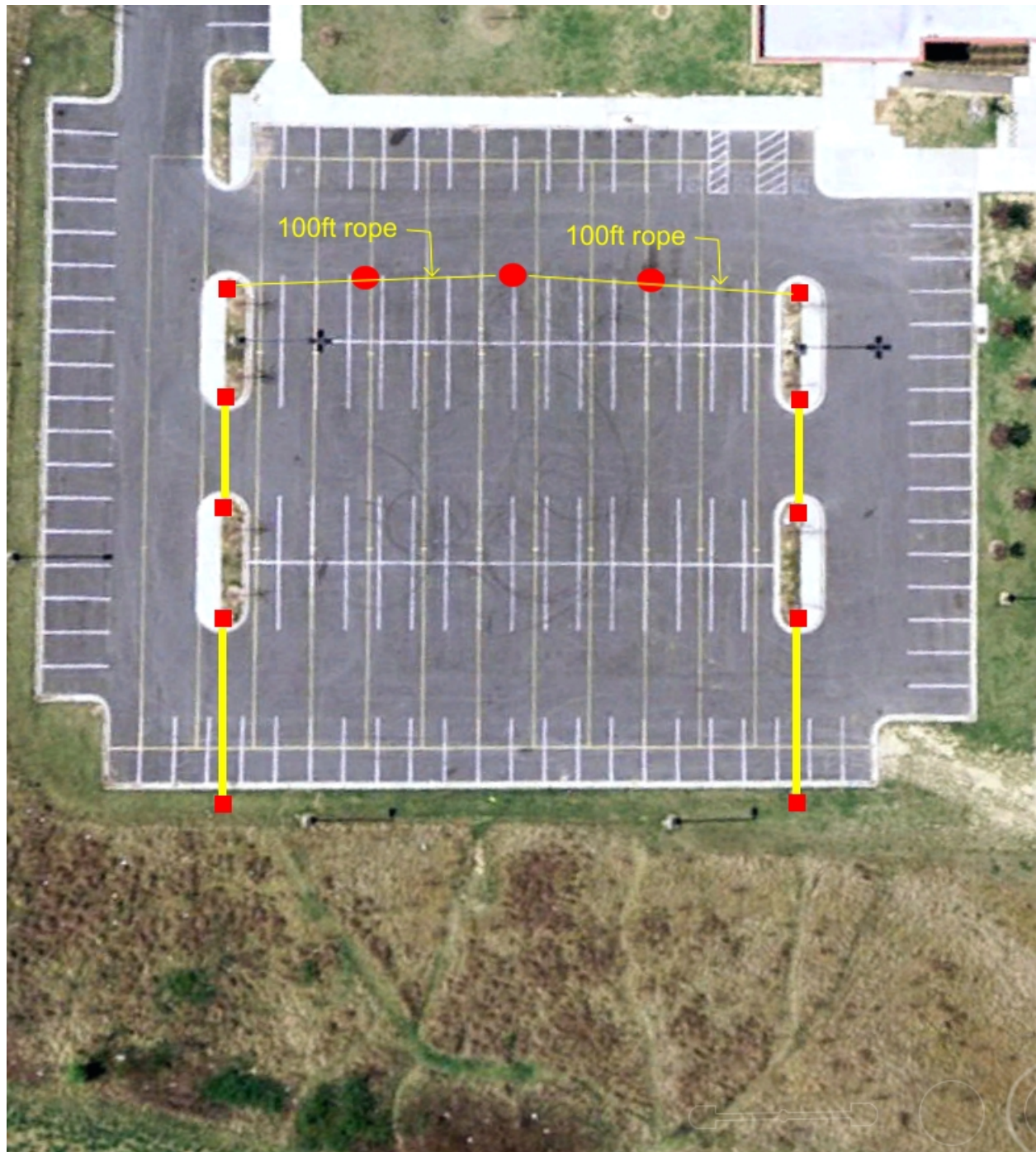
A few days before the prep day, take inventory of the equipment and hardware you'll need. Here are the lists of hardware and tools you'll need to complete the job: *(Please note that most of the hardware already exists, you'll just have to find out what needs to be replaced.)*

<b><u>HARDWARE:</u></b>	<b><u>TOOLS &amp; SUPPLIES:</u></b>
(10) 6ft 4x4 pressure treated posts Rope: (4) 50 ft segments (2) 100 ft segments (3) bucket-posts for the rear of field (6) latches (12) Wire-rope clamp & thimble sets (16) 1" eye-hook screws (12-15) cans, yellow "INVERTED" Striping paint (3) cans green striping paint (~6) "No Parking" signs (12+) Zip-ties (1) Roll dayglo orange surveyors tape	Brooms - leaf blowers Screwdrivers Cordless drill Lawnmower / weed-whacker A few sets of pliers Branch trimmer Line painting / Striping machine (w/ black metal body) shovels / post-hole digger work gloves trash bags

Someone will have to take inventory of everything that is still functional from the previous year and purchase the rest. It's highly recommended that you put hands-on everything you'll need prior to the event. Gather or purchase everything in the days leading up to the scheduled work day so that your crew can get started early in the morning before the heat of the day kicks in.

All of the hardware items above will be explained in detail below.

## Basic Layout



In this satellite photo, we have the view of the practice lot from the directors perspective. The school is at the top of the photo, the 'hill' is at the bottom. The red squares show the location of the 4x4 posts, the red circles show the location of the bucket-posts, and the yellow lines show the location of the rope. You can make out the yellow paint that's been striped on the parking lot, including hash marks.



## Painting

Painting is fairly straight forward. It takes about one can of spray paint to paint two lines. Make sure you sweep the lines clean before painting. Don't spare the paint! It may seem that you can save on paint by laying down a thin line, but this makes it hard to re-stripe next year. Make those lines nice and straight!

There are at least two kinds of striping paint cans. Be sure to purchase the cans that say "INVERTED" on the front. They have a special tip that fits our striping machine.

Next comes the green dots. The green dots are located along the yellow lines every 4 paces - these are used for interval spacing of the marchers. After the yellow paint is dry, go back and re-paint the green dots.



When you're done painting the main lot, there is another lot to paint. The spare lot is located closest to the traffic light on route 216. This lot is used by the percussionists for marching practice. You'll need to paint over the existing lines there, too. (This photo does not show the existing lines.)

## Roping

The purpose of the rope is to keep drivers from parking on the practice lot. However, the band members will need to remove the ropes when they practice. This is why we install the latches at one end of the rope. Note that the latch is one-sided which snaps to the post. The other end is secured to the rope so it doesn't get lost. Eye-hook screws are used in each 4x4 post.



Both ends of every rope are secured with a "wire-rope" thimble & clamp.



The other end of the rope is secured to the eye-hook of the adjoining post so that the entire contraption won't walk away.

New in 2010, we introduced the 'weight'. After the first few weeks, the ropes tend to stretch and sag. The weight is there to take up that slack. The weights are just another 4x4 post cut into foot-long lengths.

Should the ropes stretch to the point that the weights touch the ground, the clamps should be re-adjusted.



The three bucket posts are used for the long rope between the islands. The two 100' ropes will cover the distance, and should each latch to the middle bucket as shown.



The Day-Glo orange surveyors tape should be cut to 2ft lengths and tied to the ropes every 5 ft.



Last but not least, use the zip-ties to secure the 'No Parking' signs to the rope.



## Trimming

The 'Hill' is a HUGE benefit to the directors and drum-majors. From the hill, they can watch the band and conduct the practice. The weeds and the tall grass make it difficult for them gain access to the top. We usually mow that area. Be sure to clean up any trimmings.



and finally,

## Pick up the trash

The litter that accumulates throughout the year can be an eye-sore. The wind blows a lot of it into the corner. The basic rule of thumb is, if you can see it from the parking lot, pick it up. Also make sure that the lot itself is free from debris. Sweep up if necessary and especially be on the watch for broken glass.

Make every marching season enjoyable for our kids.  
Thank you for your assistance!

Compiled by Mike Kelly  
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